3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927
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Whether in winter or in summer, whether by litter or by cart, the Kansu roads present dangers to the traveller. In hot weather thunderstorms or cloud-bursts in the hills are not unusual, and on these occasions mountain torrents will rush down with such force as to carry everything before them, nor have a cart and mules any power to withstand the strength of the spate. Each of the large rivers is so subject to fluctuations of stream, and unexpected currents, that each year some of the more reckless villagers lose their lives by drowning. In winter the rivers are ice-bound, and supply the traveller with many a nerve-racking experience, as we found when it was necessary to cross the ice in darkness, avoiding, by the help of a tiny lantern, the deep holes and fissures.

The last day before entering Liangchow, and the two days after leaving it, are days of torture, owing to the stony nature of the road. Even the very streets of the town are as stony as the famous Portland pebble beach. Liangchow was the last outpost held by foreign missionaries in North-West China, and has been occupied by the China Inland Mission for the past forty years. Six days further on lies the city of Kanchow, and here lived a Chinese missionary and doctor who, five years previously, had taken up his residence there. From him and from his Church-officers we had received a most cordial invitation to pay them a visit, and having accepted to do so, we were soon on the march once more.

We delayed, however, a few days in the little town of Yungchang, distant two stages from Liangchow, the inhabitants of which have sunk to the lowest imaginable depth through opium smoking. Communal life here is not regulated, as in other places, by the meal hours, but by the recurring period at which the craving for the drug grips the population with invisible but relentless tentacles, so that on every *kang* the little lamp is

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The city of Lanchow fu does not cover a large area (see my cartographic conclusions Part I, sheet 27). The actual city has narrow streets with an unspeakably worn-down pavement in which whole stone slabs were missing, which no one repaired, so that I always considered it the greatest agony to go riding in one of the two-wheel carriages without springs. However, it was considered good form among the Chinese to make calls inside the city in a carriage. One sat on one's haunches on a thin cushion, tensely clutched the wooden railing on either side of the carriage and looked out on the street through a black, veil-like curtain. One's head was hurled alternately against either sides of the carriage as happens in our country when the coachman, in driving through an entrance gate /151/ awkwardly drives over the curb, except that here, of course, it happened continually. No wonder the Chinese mandarins often felt that 100 strokes of the stick were not enough for a delinquent. Every time one drove out in a carriage, one got 100 such vigorous blows for each 100 meters. At the same time, the streets were so narrow that two carriages could pass one another only with difficulty. (1) Thus it required a great deal of patience to

1. Meanwhile I heard that the government is considering macadamizing the main streets which have heretofore been merely paved. But since the Chinese do not know much about repair, this will improve matters for only a short time, no doubt.

view traffic and venture forth on a pleasure drive.

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The city is very thickly built up, with very small yards between houses which are all one-storied. Only the various administrative buildings cover larger areas; that of the governor-general and that of the treasurer of the province are surrounded by attractive parks. On the south, east and west of the actual city of Lanchow fu there are large suburbs, also walled, which are covered with houses up to the very last property. Nevertheless, along with various other people who are acquainted with the city, I estimate that it has only 100,000 or at most, 120,000 inhabitants. (2)

2. Kreitner, Im fernen Osten estimates the population at half a million. Rockhill, The Land of the Lamas thinks there are 70,000-80,000; Grenard 76,000; Bell believes there are 40,000 houses; Richard, Comprehensive